

NEW JERSEY COLLEGES:



Clock-towered Main Hall, a landmark since 1909, is one of links with past. South Hall is at left. BELOW: A service in Whitney Chapel, named for first president.

EDUCATION for LIVING

*Centenary Junior College at Hackettstown,
First of Kind in State, Proved from Start
Value of a Modern Idea in Higher Learning*

By JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM

STILL firmly fixed in the minds of most Eastern educators is the notion that a college education is four years long, eight semesters wide and deep enough to form a foundation for study in graduate school. Challenging that belief is a relatively new collegiate youngster called junior (a name which, like most "juniors," he finds is no asset).

Junior—the junior college movement—is common in the Midwest and Far West, where higher education is not married to the belief that what was good enough for church-founded colonial colleges is good enough for today. California, for example, has scores of junior colleges, most of them

publicly supported. New Jersey, in contrast, has only nine, and four of those are very small institutions devoted to limiting theological or pre-theological training.

Nevertheless, whenever and wherever junior colleges are discussed, one of New Jersey's nine is certain to be mentioned. That's Centenary Junior College in Hackettstown, unique among New Jersey junior colleges for a wide variety of reasons over and above the national reputation this women's college has earned.

FOR one thing, Centenary has roots stretching back to 1867, long before the birth of the junior college move-

This is the 24th in a series of articles which not only describe New Jersey's colleges and universities, but tell the story of the growth and traditions of individual colleges within the state, picture their roles in modern education and explain how they plan to meet what has been called "an impending tide of students." Next Sunday: The four "community" junior colleges of New Jersey.

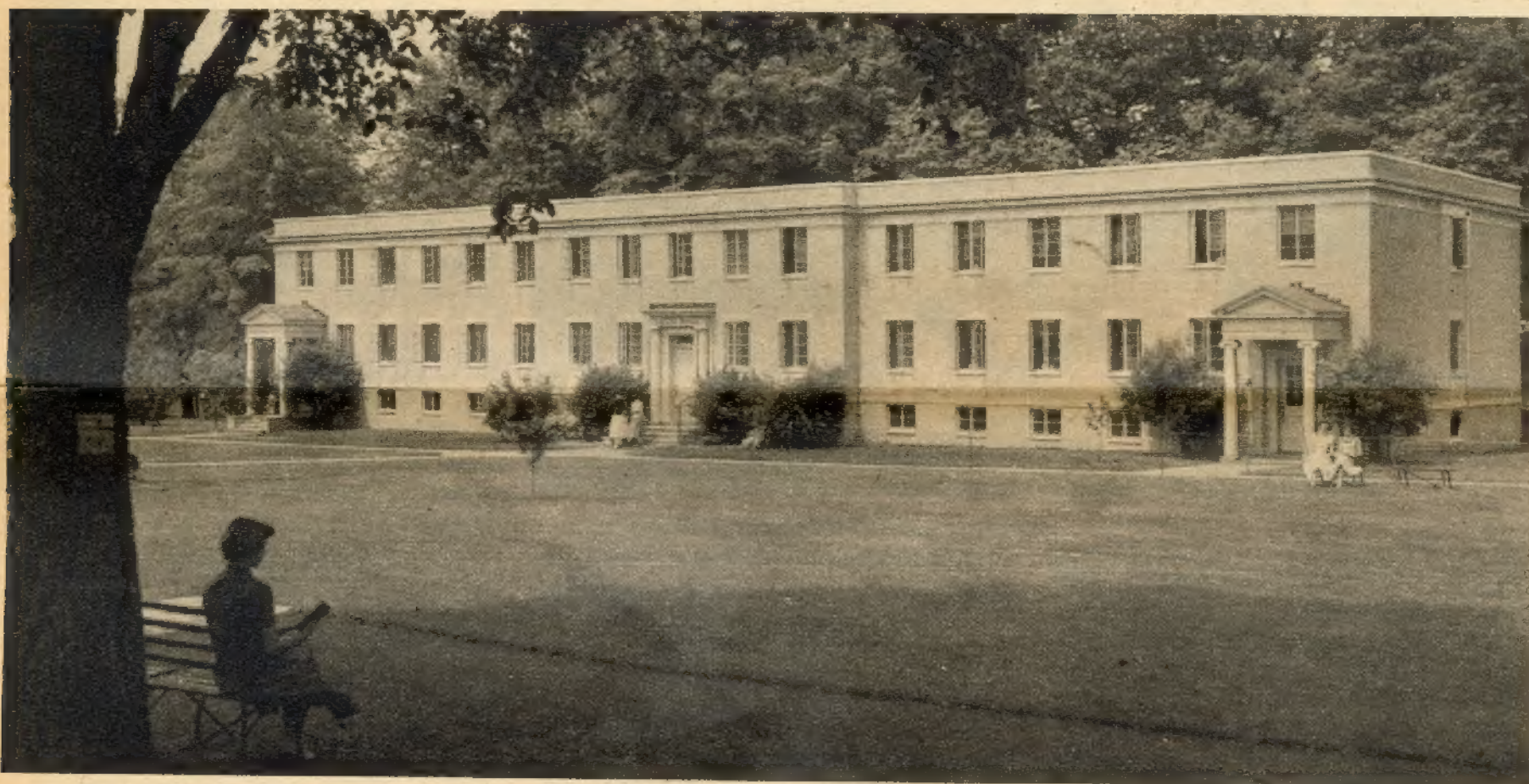




Chatting with students in office is Dr. Edward W. Seay, Centenary's eighth president. His predecessor was Dr. Hurst Robins Anderson. **BELOW:** Lotte Hall, one of three new dormitories built in 1949.



Campus view from the William H. and May D. Taylor Library reading room on second floor of Main Hall takes in John M. Reeves Student Union building. Completed in 1954, latter houses gym, social center.



ment in the 1890s. For another thing, it has a campus unequalled among New Jersey junior colleges (unsurpassed among most four-year colleges, for that matter). Finally, in a day when many junior colleges at least flirt with the thought of becoming four-year institutions, Centenary is solidly dedicated to remaining a junior college.

Centenary actually reversed the ordinary rule of starting as a two-year college and then growing to four. Back in 1874 Centenary Collegiate Institute included a four-year "Ladies' College." It granted degrees (mistress of liberal arts and mistress of English literature) until 1896 and eventually became an exclusive girls' academy from 1910 until Centenary Junior College was born in 1929.

Perhaps the thing which most differentiates Centenary from nearly all the other 500 or so junior colleges in the United States is the solidity of its heritage. Centenary is part of a modern idea in higher education, yet it is

grafted to an old trunk of tradition. If this be reckoned an intangible asset, its impact is as real as the first glimpse of the Centenary clock tower—a landmark for 55 years in the valley between Pohatcong and Schooley's mountains.

BEHIND that tower remarkable physical changes have taken place in the last eight years, changes that have permitted enrollment to double to the present peak of about 480 young women. Few people in New Jersey would be aware of those changes; after all, Centenary is 25 miles away from the nearest college, Lafayette in Easton, Pa. Lafayette, as a men's college, is not only the nearest, but from an undergraduate standpoint also the dearest neighbor of Centenary.

There is even reason to speculate that many people in Hackettstown aren't fully aware of what has happened to the college on Jefferson St. Present administrators ruefully admit that Centenary for decades made little

effort to cultivate town friends. The deliberate attempt to win Hackettstown's high regard in the last few years possibly has been every bit as important to Centenary as its rapid building pace.

Centenary's physical growth is largely hidden behind the old tower-topped Main Hall with its flanking horseshoe-shaped North and South halls. Out on the wide green lawns to the rear, two new dormitories have been built and a third is nearing completion. A new library and a new student union building are close by, both of them exceptional examples of modern architecture. One of the two old gymnasiums has been converted into a modern little theater and the other gymnasium and the swimming pool have been refurbished. All this has taken place since 1947; an alumna doesn't have to be a very Old Grad to have missed it completely.

Unquestionably the new buildings have reinforced the college's residential and academic strengths. Never-

theless, when all things else about her school have faded from memory, a Centenary graduate is likely to remember forever the spaciousness and graciousness of charming old Main Hall. Main Hall is where students say hello to Centenary and on its front steps they sing goodbye during graduation week.

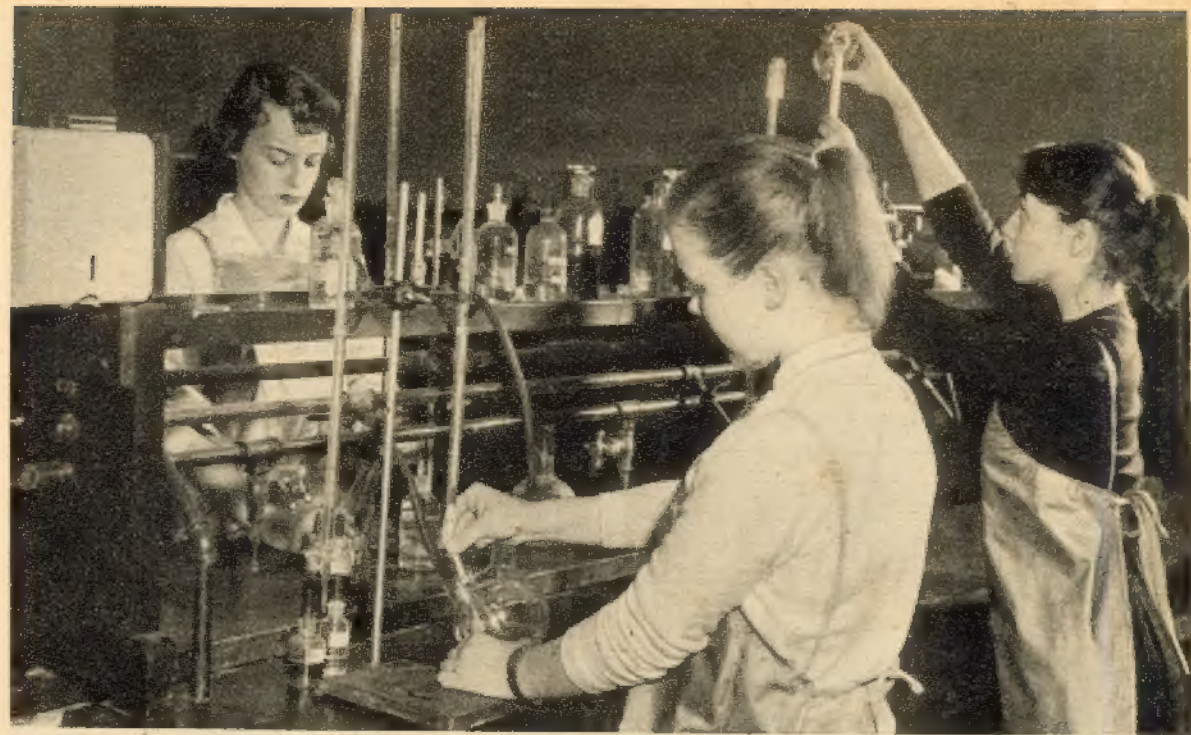
Main Hall is the link with the past. Its red-carpeted entrance foyer, agleam with white woodwork, bespeaks the quietness of an era long gone. Its handsome reception halls are where generations of Centenary's young women have met their dates. Its classrooms have imparted wisdom for 55 years and graceful Whitney Chapel on the second floor has called for spiritual awakening since 1901.

Even at that, Main Hall doesn't carry Centenary all the way back to the beginning. Main Hall came into being after fire in 1899 ravaged the five-story building where students first began attending classes in 1874. Centenary had been chartered in 1867 by the Methodist Church, to celebrate the centennial of Methodism in the United States, but it took seven long years to find a location and to gather the money to erect a suitable building.

CENTENARY Collegiate Institute struggled through those early years, yet ever maintained the resolve of first president Dr. George H. Whitney: "I will not sacrifice thoroughness for numbers." The academy in those days included both "young ladies" and "young gentlemen," although the college, as mentioned, catered only to young women.

After the last four-year degree class departed in 1898, Centenary Collegiate Institute settled down to being a good coeducational academy. Then, on Oct. 31, 1899, flames whipped through the old building and at 2 a.m., as the tower clock chimed the hour, the tower and walls collapsed. Centenary seemed dead in those early morning hours; many felt it should stay that

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Laboratories for art (left), chemistry and home economics comprise three basic programs at Centenary—vocations, "transfer" for additional educational training, and "general" for living preparation.

CENTENARY

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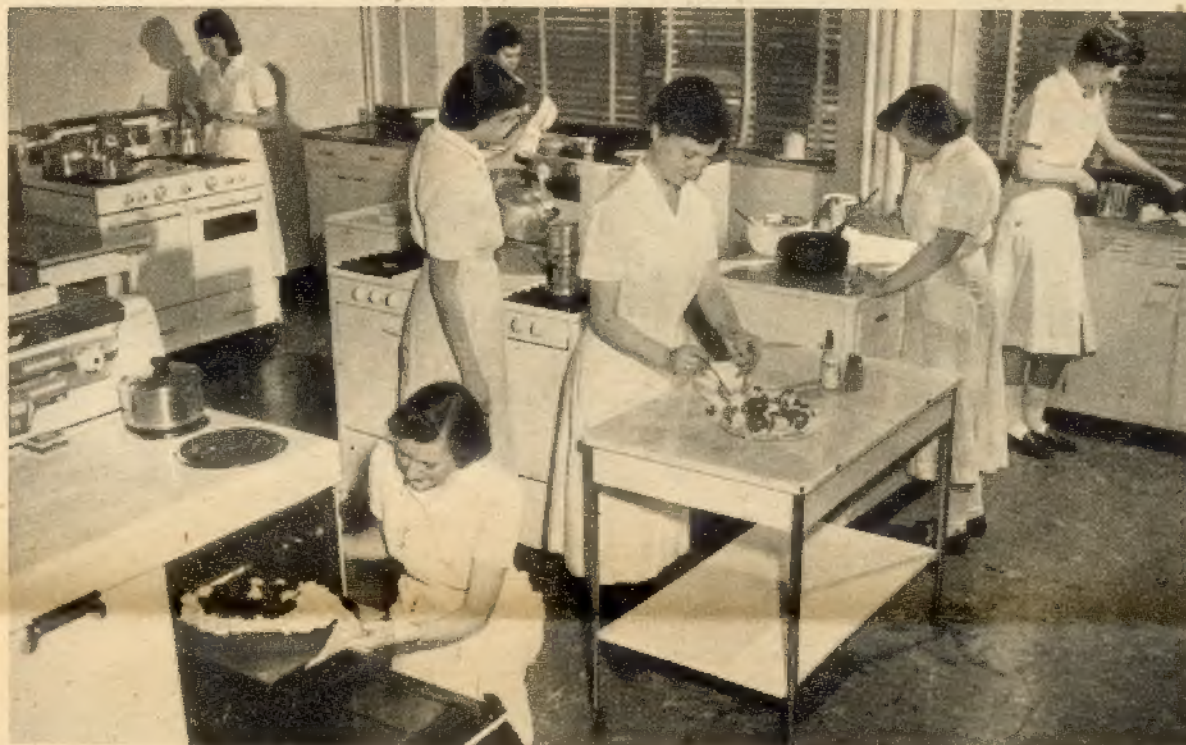
way rather than shoulder another heavy financial burden.

Fire couldn't kill the Hackettstown school. In September 1901, 154 students entered C.C.I. They marveled at the beauty of new Main Hall, whose architectural motif couldn't be pinned down to any one influence—but whose over-all effect ever since has been one of soft roundness. The horseshoe shape of the dormitories (North and South halls) intrigued architects and builders who never before had seen the like (and still haven't). Male students found delight in a more robust way: they found the curving dormitory halls a perfect place to roll bowling balls in the dead of night.

MALE students graduated for the last time in 1910, much to the initial indignation and the later relief of the young women (who found many restrictions ended with the departure of the men). Old Centenary encountered troublesome days, at their very worst when Dr. Robert Johns Trevorrow was installed as president in 1917. Enrollment had dropped to about 70 students and Centenary's future appeared dim.

Dr. Trevorrow remained at Centenary the rest of his life, serving 26 years until his death in January 1943. By 1920 enrollment climbed to the point where North Hall had to be reopened after being closed 10 years. By 1924 all debts had been paid. Of all Dr. Trevorrow's contributions to Centenary, however, none surpassed his recognition that the old days as an exclusive girls' academy neared their end. Good public high school education made private academies less needed.

Willingly, therefore, the trustees agreed when Dr. Trevorrow suggested opening a women's college at Centenary. He recommended a junior college, then almost an unknown educational venture in the East, and in September 1929 the first class of 47 young women entered Centenary Junior College. Dr. Trevorrow stated his college's objective, essentially unchanged ever since: "Big enough to command attention, small enough for personalized care and attention."



CENTENARY established itself quickly in academic circles; in 1932 the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools accredited the college—one of the first two junior colleges so accredited. Dr. Trevorrow found his dreams for a one-million-dollar endowment and expansion fund washed down the depression drain. The college added only one building, Trevorrow Hall, a three-story science, art and home economics laboratory erected in 1940.

When Dr. Hurst Robins Anderson succeeded Dr. Trevorrow in 1943, therefore, Centenary still suffered from limited facilities. Dr. Anderson in 1946 launched an \$800,000 campaign to bring the campus up to date—by 75th anniversary time in 1949, if possible. As funds came in Dr. Anderson remodeled Whitney Chapel and started Lotte Hall (a new dormitory) but in 1948 he resigned to accept another position (he is now president of American University).

Expansion—and the raising of money to accomplish it—became the responsibility of Dr. Edward W. Seay, inaugurated as Centenary's eighth president in September 1948. Dr. Seay never hesitated; in less than eight years everything contemplated in 1946 has been accomplished, and then some.

Today Centenary can accommodate

500 students with ease. That's as far in enrollment as the college wants to go. "If we go higher," Dr. Seay points out, "we'll lose what we want to keep—individualized and personalized attention."

CENTENARY students get that, for sure. Basically the college has three broad curricula—a two-year program for those wishing to transfer to a four-year college; a two-year "general education for living" and a two-year program with a vocational emphasis. In actual practice, however, each girl's program is tailored to her individual aims and potentialities as carefully as a suit is tailored to an individual figure.

This is an expensive way to educate, even with all its inherent advantages. Centenary recognizes that, recognizes that its enrollment is "highly selective." There is no questioning the high value of a Centenary education and there should not be—considering that annual minimum expenses are \$1,800 for a student living on campus (only 12 this year do not). Average expenditures probably are close to \$2,200 each year.

Despite the fact that Centenary has some scholarship and work aid, it remains obvious that the average student comes from a family where finances are not a pressing worry. Still, about two out of three students are

from public high schools, and the demand for an education of the Centenary type increases. This year the college had three applicants for every student accepted, expects the ratio to increase by September.

Dr. Seay feels the first objective has been reached—"to give 500 students the finest educational accommodations in the United States." His next objective is to raise college endowments to between 1½ and two million dollars. Centenary leaders have realized for many years that the college depends far too much on tuition income. Dr. Seay expects to remove that financial weakness: "I've seen a campus dream unfold at Centenary; the endowment doesn't phase me one bit."

DR. SEAY has worked hard to improve town and college relationships. He is especially proud that Hackettstown recently agreed to close a town street that bisected the campus after refusing to do so many times before. "I think I regard that as the outstanding event of my administration here," he says.

Dr. Seay knows that "junior" in a college name is a handicap. "The word 'junior' in junior college has had a stigma," he explains. "People look on a junior college as something less than a college, just as they look on junior as less than a man." Centenary hopes soon to drop the word "junior" from its name—just as more than half the junior colleges in the country already have.

Centenary's program is aimed for the young woman whose intellectual capacity is above average, yet the college seeks a student who is well adjusted and is interested in activities beyond the classroom. Once the student arrives on campus she is exposed to a constant program of testing and private counseling to help guide her along the way.

At one time a high percentage of Centenary graduates took a general course, without either a career or additional education in mind. That percentage is decreasing, until now only about one girl in five takes a general course. The other four are about evenly divided between continuing at a four-year college or entering a career for which they have been trained specifically at Centenary.

Career training encompasses many

fields, from aeronautics to fine arts, from home economics to nursing, from laboratory technician to medical secretary, from physical or occupational therapy to secretarial science. There are many more, some — like nursery school teaching—planned so that a graduate can enter a profession at the end of two years or can be prepared to enter a four-year college to complete work. Regardless of the vocational specialization, a strong liberal arts training is encouraged.

CENTENARY'S unflagging concentration on the individual permits a student great flexibility in finding herself and her life's work at the college. Many students who enroll in the general course with no particular goal soon find themselves eager to specialize for a career or to continue on to more education. Often a student who had planned to transfer to a four-year college, instead changes her emphasis to a career curriculum.

Centenary's students show a maturity sometimes found wanting in first and second-year college students —and even the fact that second-year students are called "seniors" at Centenary makes them still sophomores as far as age is concerned. "We grow up faster here," they tell a questioner. "We have to assume responsibilities quickly. We have to get a lot out of two years."

The location of the college in a small town in a rural county forces strong dependence on college activities. That, plus the fact that many traditions date back a half century or more, gives Centenary a depth of campus spirit often missing on junior college campuses. Life at Centenary is a closely knit existence, revolving in large measure around three campus sororities.

Any student who wishes can join a

sorority. The three Greek letter organizations are "secret" societies (although the impression lingers that the "secrecy" is as much in fun as in fact) and all of them are the outgrowth of old-time campus literary societies. Two of them, Dioksophian (Sigma Epsilon Phi) and Peithosophian (Theta Epsilon Nu), started in the "Ladies' College" in 1875; the third, Callilogian (Delta Sigma Sigma), founded at Peddie Institute in 1861, was transferred to Centenary by an English teacher who came to Centenary when Peddie became all-male and Centenary all-female in 1910.

"Peith," "Dick" and "Cal" pledge in October, hold their joint Sweetheart Ball at valentine time and sponsor Dad's Day in the spring. They compete in a song fest at the time of the Sweetheart Ball, vie for the "Chief Lotsapoppas" cup awarded to the sorority with the most fathers present on Dad's Day and each spring earnestly seek "The Lady," Centenary's bronze version of Hollywood's "Oscar."

"The Lady" has been on campus since May 20, 1910. She is a piece of gold bronze statuary "by a French artist and imported by Tiffany." The trustees donated her in the hope of stimulating original masterpieces of prose or poetry which have to be presented orally. The stimulation has endured; competition is as keen as ever, with sorority possession of "The Lady" a significant campus honor.

SOcial life is full, with formal and informal dances enlivened by dates from Princeton, Rutgers, Lehigh and Lafayette (and whatever other college strikes an individual's fancy). Centenary's dramatic program has won wide attention, particularly since completion of the Little Theater in 1951. The Centenary Singers are highly re-



A highlight of student year is Sweetheart Ball, jointly sponsored by campus Greek letter societies, in decorated Student Union Center.

garded, having appeared eight times in Town Hall and singing before armed forces in Europe the last two summers. The newspaper, "Spilled Ink," and the yearbook, "The Hack," are examples of excellent college publications.

Close to the heart of every Centenary undergraduate is her college's honor system, which extends to every facet of campus life. Ask a student what she is likely to remember most about this college—a dance? sorority pledging? a play? More often than not she'll say: "The honor system ceremony during freshman orientation week." If she's in a group, heads will nod affirmatively.

One never-ending source of discussion is the long-standing custom of wearing white (white dress or white jacket and skirt) to dinner on Monday through Thursday evenings. Dinner on Tuesday and Thursday is by candlelight. Naturally the girls express themselves freely and sometimes negatively on the quaintness of these customs—yet given the chance (as they were a few years back) to continue or abandon the white and the candlelight, they say "continue" by an overwhelming majority. They like white and they like candles.

EVERY tradition points finally to that night in June just before graduation when seniors gather on the steps of Main Hall to sing their goodbyes to the freshmen. The graduates-to-be serenade and are serenaded—and in return give freshmen the privilege of using the front steps on Main Hall and the right to walk on Church St. going downtown. Young voices join in sweet sadness; Centenary entwines them ever closer.

Out into the world go the seniors with A.A. (associate in arts) degrees—to prove the worth of their Centenary training as transfers at senior colleges (they do very nicely); to prove the

value of their two-year training in a wide range of careers, and to prove the value of a general education in marriage and/or community. They are proving themselves, but in a larger sense, they are proving also the value of Centenary in particular and junior college education in general.

Junior colleges may well be a strong answer to the question of the onrushing swarm of students about to engulf college campuses. Some argue that 10 new publicly supported junior colleges established in key locations in New Jersey could do a far better and less expensive job of meeting demands for college education than unlimited expansion of a state university.

THERE are good arguments for junior colleges. They permit a student to stay close at home and get his first two years of college at a moderate cost. He can then transfer to a senior college for advanced training. More important, about 50 per cent of all young men and women who start college drop out within two years—indicating that they might be better prepared in a two-year curriculum.

Centenary is not likely in the foreseeable future to be a college anyone will attend to save money before transferring to a senior college. Yet, as the first junior college in New Jersey and as one of America's foremost quality junior colleges, Centenary has a very real role in developing a New Jersey junior college program. Centenary has experience and in its reawakened awareness of its neighbors willingly shares that experience.

Nevertheless, if the junior college is to do for New Jersey what it has done for California, something more within the means of an average family than Centenary must be envisioned. The part played by New Jersey's four "community" junior colleges will be discussed in the next article in this series.



The College Grill, open each day of week until 10 o'clock at night, provides students with a place for informal snacks and social life.